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# THE HEALTHY HANDS CENTER

## GREEN THUMB...OR PAINFUL?

So, spring has officially sprung. Our clocks are set forward and shorts and t-shirts are starting to appear on the street. St. Patrick's day. Easter Bonnets. Spring training, March Madness. Passover matzahs. All signs that the snow of winter is fading into our past.



Daffodils are poking through the softening earth. Forsythia are blooming bright. And for those of you with "green thumbs", thoughts are turning to seedlings, manure, and last frost.

Some of the rest of you, might be marking your calendars for spring cleaning chores, both in and out of the house.

Or maybe, scheduling in some rounds of golf.

## USE IT...DON'T ABUSE IT

One of the more common complaints that I see relates to **pain in the thumb and wrist**. Often, people are unaware that they are developing early forms of arthritis. The thumb is often taken for granted in terms of what it does and how much we use it, and abuse it. Then lo and behold it starts to hurt.

It's somewhat obvious and quaint to say, but nonetheless true, as Benjamin Franklin said:

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

In other words, when it comes to weeding the garden and turning the soil, or moving boxes to and from the attic, be careful how much stress and strain you put directly on your thumb.

There are loads of tools and assist devices that will make life easier and safer. Seek them out and use them. One of the simplest forms of protection when gardening is a good pair of supportive gloves. Some even have extra protection for the thumb. But, there's lots more.

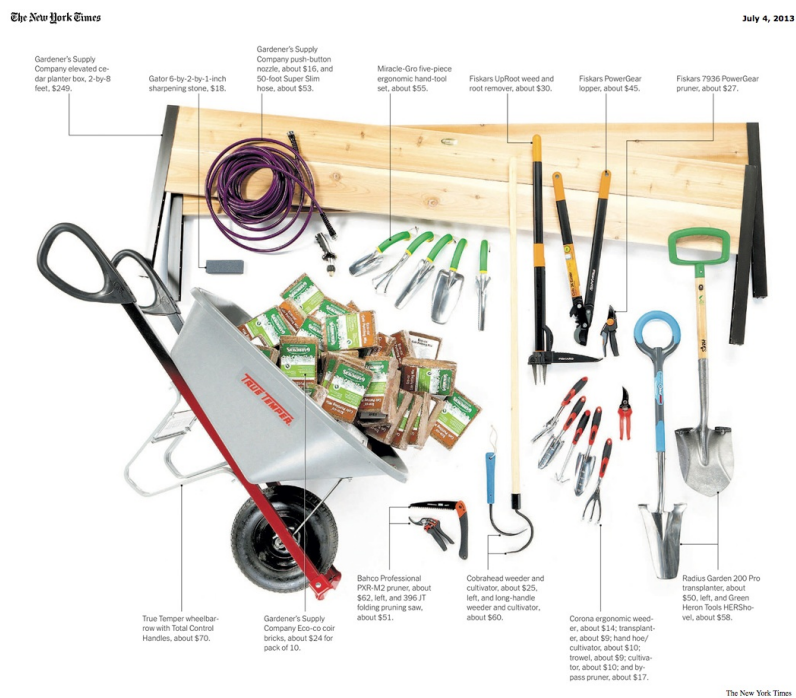
[ see the picture below, from an article by Bob Tedeschi, July 3, 2013, in the NY Times ]

Another thing: listen to your body. Don't stop living life, but be smart too. If your body is acting up, whether it's your thumb or back or whatever, take a break, and maybe come back to "fight" another day.

## For those of you celebrating...Happy Easter! For others, an early wish for a Happy Passover!

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